DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 403 734 FL 022 062

AUTHOR Minami, Masahiko
TITLE English and Japanese: Cross-Cultural Comparison of Narrative Elicitation Patterns.
PUB DATE 6 Mar 94
NOTE 36p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Association for Applied Linguistics (Baltimore, MD, March 5-8, 1994).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Comparative Analysis; Cross Cultural Studies; Cultural Awareness; Cultural Differences; *Cultural Influences; English; Foreign Countries; Japanese; Language Patterns; Language Usage; *Mothers; *Parent Child Relationship; *Parent Role; *Speech Habits; *Young Children
IDENTIFIERS Canada; Japan; United States

ABSTRACT

Two studies examined conversations between mothers and children from three different groups to determine culturally preferred narrative elicitation patterns: (1) Japanese-speaking mother-child pairs living in Japan; (2) Japanese-speaking mother-child pairs living in the United States; and (3) English-speaking Canadian mother-child pairs. Experiment 1, which compared mothers from the two Japanese groups, found that Japanese mothers in the United States were more likely to give their children topic-extension prompts than mothers living Japan. Experiment 2, which included comparisons of both groups with English-speaking mother-child pairs, found that Japanese mothers in the United States and Japan provided less evaluation of their children's speaking and more verbal acknowledgement than English-speaking mothers. Japanese mothers in the United States requested more description from their children than did Japanese mothers in Japan. At 5 years of age, Japanese-speaking children, whether living in the United States or Japan, produced about 1.2 utterances per turn, whereas English-speaking children produced about 2.1 utterances per turn. Thus, whereas English-speaking mothers allow their children to take long monological turns, and even encourage this behavior, Japanese mothers simultaneously pay considerable attention to their children's narratives and facilitate frequent turn exchanges. Contains 17 references. (Author/MDM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 403 734

English and Japanese:

Cross-cultural Comparison of Narrative Elicitation Patterns

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Masahiko Minami

Harvard Graduate School of Education

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Masahiko Minami
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Running Head: ENGLISH AND JAPANESE

Author's Address: Harvard Graduate School of Education
Larsen Hall
Appian Way
Cambridge, MA 02138

* An earlier version of this paper was presented by the author at the American Association for Applied Linguistics Annual Conference in Baltimore, MD, March 6, 1994. The research described in this paper was made possible through an American Psychological Association's Dissertation Research Award and through a travel and research grant from the Harvard University Office of International Education/Harvard Institute for International Development. The author would also like to thank Carole Peterson, Memorial University of Newfoundland, for providing the data that were collected as part of a research project supported by Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada grant OGP0000513.

FL022062

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Abstract

Conversations between mothers and children from three different groups were analyzed to study culturally preferred narrative elicitation patterns: (1) Japanese-speaking mother-child pairs living in Japan, (2) Japanese-speaking mother-child pairs living in the U.S., and (3) English-speaking Canadian mother-child pairs. Study One, which compared mothers from the two different Japanese groups, suggests that Japanese mothers in the U.S. were more likely to give their children topic-extension prompts right after using a particular pattern of discourse device. Study Two, further including English-speaking mother-child pairs, yielded the following salient contrasts: (1) In comparison to English-speaking mothers, mothers of both Japanese groups gave proportionately less evaluation. (2) Both in terms of frequency and proportion, mothers of both Japanese groups gave more verbal acknowledgment than did English-speaking mothers. (3) However, Japanese mothers in the U.S. requested proportionately more description from their children than did Japanese mothers in Japan. At five years, Japanese-speaking children, whether living in Japan or the U.S., produced roughly 1.2 utterances per turn on average, whereas English-speaking children produced about 2.1 utterances per turn, a significant difference. Thus, while English-speaking mothers allow their children to take long monologic turns, and give many evaluative comments, Japanese mothers, whether living in Japan or the U.S., simultaneously pay considerable attention to their children's narratives and facilitate frequent turn exchanges. The two studies reported in this paper thus suggest that these differences and similarities are explained in terms of culture; that is, while inducting their children into a communicative style that is reflective of their native culture, Japanese mothers living in the U.S. are, at the same time, subject to the influence of Western culture. Implications of these findings are further considered in the light of improving cross-cultural understanding.

English and Japanese:
Cross-cultural Comparison of Narrative Elicitation Patterns

Introduction

Different cultures have different priorities in respect to caring for, socializing, and educating young children. This becomes clear when observing that, from early childhood on, children in different cultures have to learn the appropriate pragmatic use of their language, as well as the grammar and vocabulary (Hymes, 1974). The acquisition of a culture-specific communicative style thus plays a significant role in the process of language acquisition and the development of language skills, such as narrative discourse skills.

Despite the fact that both Japanese children and children in Western societies live in similar industrial societies and, in this sense, experience no major environmental or social differences, Japanese children are trained differently from their Western counterparts. In the past, for example, cultural anthropologist William Caudill and his group examined the differences between Japanese and American children and their mothers in light of behavioral patterns and underlying beliefs. Specifically, they found that Japanese middle-class mothers spoke less frequently to their toddlers than did American middle-class mothers (Caudill & Weinstein, 1969). Those researchers also identified that American young children expressed positive as well as negative emotions with greater ease than did Japanese children of the same age (Caudill & Schooler, 1973). Thus, cross-cultural differences in mother-child interactions have presented interesting results.

Purpose of the Present Study

Following this line of research, the purpose of the present study is to examine culturally preferred narrative elicitation patterns. The underlying assumption is that since the mother is generally the primary interactant for a young child, the child's early

conversational context is shaped by maternal questions and prompts. As a natural extension of this assumption, the mother, either implicitly or explicitly, provides her child with culturally appropriate narrative forms. Thus, as the result of social interactions, young children's narratives are shaped into culturally preferred narrative patterns.

Methods

Subjects

Conversations between mothers and children from the following three groups were analyzed to study culturally preferred narrative patterns: (1) 10 middle-class Japanese five-year-olds and their mothers living in Japan (none of these mother-child pairs had experienced living overseas at the time of interview); (2) 8 middle-class Japanese five-year-olds and their mothers living in the United States; and (3) 8 English-speaking middle-class Canadian five-year-olds and their mothers. Each group is balanced in terms of gender, and the children's average age. Mothers were asked to tape-record conversations at home with their children, discussing past experiences. Some mother-child pairs talked about more events than others. Thus, to establish a comparable data base, I decided to analyze only the initial three narrative productions by each mother-child pair.

STUDY ONE

Narrative discourse devices in Japanese

The first study I will discuss was designed to provide detailed information regarding how discourse devices employed by Japanese mothers shape their children's narrative style. Specifically, I will discuss two major types of discourse devices: (1) the listener's un (uh huh) in response to the narrator's ne (you know) and (2) huun (well).

Example 1 below is from Sachi, a 5-year, 9-month-old Japanese girl living in Japan. Sachi and her mother are in the middle of discourse about how her teacher was disguised as a spook at a birthday party that was held in preschool.

Example 1 Sachi and her mother's interaction

MOT: tahjobi kai de obake yashiki shite.

CHI: eh tto **ne**,

(MOT: **un**)

CHI: sensei uso tsuiten yan.

ko shite **ne**,

(MOT: **un**)

CHI: sensei ga **ne**,

(MOT: **un**)

CHI: omen kabutte

ko shite **ne**,

(MOT: **un**)

CHI: datte sensei **ne**,

(MOT: **un**)

CHI: Kumagumi san no heya e itta toki **ne**,

(MOT: **un**)

CHI: konna kao yatta mon.

(MOT: **ah so**)

CHI: obake no kao yatta mon.

MOT: obake no kao yattan.

he:!

Translation

MOT: At a birthday party, (you) played a haunted house.

CHI: Um, you know,

(MOT: uh huh)

CHI: the teacher was a liar.

(she) did this, you know,

(MOT: uh huh)

CHI: the teacher, you know,

(MOT: uh huh)

CHI: put on a mask,

and did this, you know,

(MOT: uh huh)

CHI: because the teacher, you know,

(MOT: uh huh)

CHI: when (we) went into the Kumagumi (Bear Class) room, you know,

(MOT: uh huh)

CHI: (we found her face) was like this.

(MOT: uh huh)

CHI: (Hers) was a spooky face.

MOT: (Hers) was a spooky face.

Dear!

Spoken Japanese is often produced in smaller units than traditional grammatical ones, such as a sentence or a clause. These smaller units are often marked by the particle ne, which serves as a contextualization device similar to "you know" in English. As Sachi's narrative illustrates, segmented by sentence- or clause-final particles (e.g., ko shite **ne**: did this, you know) as well as ones within a sentence (e.g., sensei **ne**: the teacher, you know), these smaller parts serve as units in oral Japanese discourse.

More importantly, however, one of the noticeable aspects in this example is that the mother contributes to the child's narrative construction by frequently showing brief acknowledgment un (uh huh). By uttering ne (you know), the speaker often waits for the

listener's brief acknowledgment. In other words, the listener's frequent brief acknowledgment is a discursive device that helps the narrator construct a sentence and, moreover, facilitate narration. Conversely, we can also say that the Japanese mother speaks few words and few utterances per turn, and instead, often simply shows attention, which, in fact, serves to divide the child's utterances into small units.

The second discursive device (i.e., another showing attention) used by many Japanese mothers is huun (well). In Japanese adult discourse, huun (well) has been noted as serving a prefacing function signaling the introduction of a new topic (Maynard, 1989; Yamada, 1992). The Japanese mother-child interaction, however, reveals that the use of huun (well) has the following three different functions: (1) prefacing of topic-extension, (2) simple verbal acknowledgment, and (3) prefacing of topic-switch.

When a child talks about a particular incident, if the mother says, "huun, sorekara" (Well. Then?) or more extensively "huun, sorekara doo shita no?" (Well. Then, what did you do?) the mother's use of huun (well) indicates that she wants the child to extend the topic. Thus, this use of huun (well) serves as prefacing of topic-extension. Notice that in each of the following examples, huun (well) comes right before the topic extension statement:

Ayaka	(a Japanese girl in Japan, aged 5;3)	
CHI:	ocha gashi mitai na yatsu tabeta.	
	((I) ate something like a tea cake.)	
MOT:	honto. (Really.)	
	huun. (Well.)	**[prefacing of topic-extension]**
	sorekara? (Then?)	
Satoshi	(a Japanese boy in the U.S., aged 5;3)	
MOT:	huun (Well).	**[prefacing of topic-extension]**

ano sensei nante namae daro?

(What is that teacher's name?)

CHI: wakan nai. ((I) don't know.)

On the other hand, if the mother says to the child "huun" (well), and the child then continues his or her story, it can be interpreted that the mother simply acknowledges what the child has said. The function of this huun (well) is thus very similar to the previously mentioned un (uh huh):

Akio (a Japanese boy in Japan, aged 5;6)

CHI: niwatori mo ita. ((I) saw chickens, too.)

MOT: huun. (Well.) **[simple acknowledgment]**

CHI: de na gyunyu nonda. (and, you know, (I) drank milk.)

Koshiro (a Japanese boy in the U.S., aged 5;9)

CHI: yellow team ga katta mitai.

(The yellow team seems to have won the game.)

MOT: huun. (Well). **[simple acknowledgment]**

CHI: Shusuke nante ikkai mo irerenakattanda yo.

(Shusuke couldn't throw (it) in even once.)

Further, if the mother says, "huun, hoka ni nani shita no kyoo yochien de?" (Well. What else did you do in preschool today?) the use of huun (well) signals a preface to a new topic. Notice that in each of the following examples huun (well) comes right before the topic-switch statement or (for example, Teru's mother changes the topic of conversation from play to lunch):

Sachi (a Japanese girl in Japan, aged 5;9)

MOT: huun. (Well.) **[prefacing of topic-switch]**
honnara ne, eh tto hora ano yochien no otomari hoiku
atta ja nai. (Then (changing the topic), you know, um (you) had overnight schooling.)

CHI: un. (Yeah.)

Teru (a Japanese boy in the U.S., aged 5;1)

CHI: Yuri chan to Aki kun to boku. (Yuri and Aki and I.)

MOT: huun. (Well) **[prefacing of topic-switch]**
obento kino wa takusan nokoshite kita kedo.
(Speaking of lunch yesterday, (you) left a lot.)

As can be seen in these examples, huun (well) indicates a certain mental transition; while uttering huun (well), the mother evidently decides whether to continue the current topic or terminate it and introduce a new one. In reference not only to un but also to huun, using the term "back-channeling" has intentionally been avoided because this term implies an unconditional signal to go on talking. While some of these huun function as the prefacing of topic-extension, there is at least the opportunity here for the listener to take the floor. Overall, however, we may be able to conclude that the more the mother uses this discourse device as prefacing of topic-extension, the further the child develops the topic.

Results

Two types of discourse devices in Japanese were statistically analyzed, namely, first, the child's ne (you know) immediately followed by the mother's un (uh huh) and second, maternal prefacing huun (well).[1] For the first, I counted frequencies of "the child's ne (you know) immediately followed by the mother's un (uh huh)," and conducted

a two-way (group x gender) analysis of variance (ANOVA) on this frequency variable. This test revealed that there was no significant effect of group or gender.[2] As far as this variable is concerned, therefore, whether living in Japan or the United States, Japanese mothers use the same strategy to support their children's narrative production.

For the second, I conducted a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) for the three dependent variables, (1) prefacing of topic-extension huun (well), (2) simple acknowledgment huun (well), and (3) prefacing of topic-switch huun (well).[3] MANOVA followed by a series of analyses of variance (ANOVA) revealed that compared to Japanese mothers living in Japan, Japanese mothers living in the United States were more likely to use huun (well) as prefacing of topic-extension.[4] This result thus indicates that compared to Japanese mothers living in Japan, Japanese mothers living in the United States were more likely to give their topic-extension prompts right after uttering huun.

STUDY TWO

In earlier research Minami and McCabe (1991a) have found that Japanese elementary-school children living in the United States tend to tell concise stories that are cohesive collections of several experiences that they had. Minami and McCabe (1991a) have also found that this succinct narrative style exhibited by Japanese children shows a remarkable contrast to European-American children's narrative style, which is often a lengthy story detailing a single experience and often revolving around the solution of some problem.

To find the origin of such differences in early mother-child interactions, in addition to the previously used two Japanese groups, Study Two includes North American parent-child pairs collected by McCabe and Peterson (1990, 1991).[5] Consider, for example, the following dialogue between a five-year-old Canadian girl, Kelly, and her mother. Unlike the Japanese five-year-olds' narratives previously presented, Kelly takes longer monologic turns. As can be seen below, moreover, Kelly's mother neither facilitates frequent turn exchanges nor gives frequent verbal acknowledgment.

Example 2 Kelly and her mother's interaction

MOT: Why don't you tell me about the time you fell down on the Decker's driveway?

CHI: I was on my backyard playing.
And I heard this fighting noise.
And I thought that someone was badly hurt.
So I ran into the Decker's driveway.
I had, I had a big cut.
And it was my biggest cut I ever had.

MOT: Oh, that must have really hurt eh?

CHI: Uh huh.

Coding

Transcripts of all parents' speech were scored according to Dickinson's (1991) system, which was previously used to analyze how speech acts are mapped onto dialogic narrative discourse in English (Dickinson, 1991; McCabe & Peterson, 1991). By using Dickinson's coding scheme as a basis, Minami and McCabe (1991b, 1993) have devised appropriate coding rules that are also applicable cross-linguistically, particularly to Japanese data.

Insert Figure 1 about here.

Figure 1 gives a visual representation of coding rules for parental speech; according to these coding rules, transcripts of all parents' speech were scored. Parental utterances were coded as one of three types: (I) topic-initiation (or topic-switch), (II) topic-extension, and (III) other conversational strategies, which show attention, such as "uh huh" and "well." Speech patterns categorized as topic-extension are further

categorized into: (A) descriptive statements that describe a scene, a condition, or a state, (B) statements about actions that, accompanied by an action verb, describe a specific action, (C) mother's evaluative comments, and (D) mother's request for child's evaluative comments. Detailed guidelines for these categorizations are explained in Table 1.

Insert Table 1 about here.

Results

First, I analyzed frequencies, which represent the impact that loquaciousness might have on children's narration (e.g., McCabe & Peterson, 1991; Reese, Haden, & Fivush, 1992). In addition, I used proportions because they correct for differences in length and allows us to see differing relative emphasis on components of narration. To test for the effect of group and gender, I conducted multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVA) for the major coding categories: maternal requests for the child's descriptions, actions, and evaluations, maternal evaluations, statements showing attention, and initiation (see Table 2).

Insert Table 2 about here.

With regard to frequencies, the results of MANOVA and subsequent ANOVA and other related tests suggest that mothers of both Japanese groups gave more verbal acknowledgment (i.e., statements showing attention) than did English-speaking mothers (see Figure 2).[6]

Insert Figure 2 about here.

In terms of proportions, the results of MANOVA and a series of a subsequent ANOVA and other related tests suggest the following:[7] (1) In comparison to English-speaking mothers, mothers of both Japanese groups gave proportionately less evaluation (see Figure 3). (2) Mothers of both Japanese groups gave proportionately more verbal acknowledgment (i.e., statements showing attention) than did English-speaking mothers (see Figure 4). (3) However, Japanese mothers living in the United States requested proportionately more description from their children than did Japanese mothers living in Japan. Moreover, there was no statistically significant difference observed between Japanese mothers living in the United States and English-speaking mothers (see Figure 5).

Insert Figure 3 about here.

Insert Figure 4 about here.

Insert Figure 5 about here.

Child's length of turns

Utterances over turns (UOT) can be defined as the number of utterances produced by a speaker per turn. In addition to the frequencies of the coded behaviors, I examined the child's utterances over turns. As Tables 3a, 3b, and 3c illustrate, around the age of 5 years, although males' utterances (2.33) are slightly longer than females' (1.90), English-speaking children roughly produced 2.11 utterances per turn on the average. On the other hand, Japanese children living in Japan and the United States produced 1.19 and 1.24

utterances, respectively. Thus, Japanese-speaking children, whether living in Japan or the United States, produced about 1.22 utterances on the average.[8]

I performed a 3 x 2 (group x gender) analysis of variance (ANOVA) on the variable, UOT (i.e. utterances over turns). This ANOVA and a subsequent series of related tests revealed that Japanese children, whether living in Japan or the United States, produced fewer utterances per turn than did English-speaking children (Figure 6).[9]

Insert Tables 3a, 3b, and 3c about here.

Insert Figure 6 about here.

Discussion

It has been claimed that in North America an individual should be verbally assertive, whereas in Japanese group-oriented society an individual should be verbally restrained. These explanations may account for why North American mothers emphasize mastery of verbal skills and, in contrast, why Japanese mothers provide fewer evaluative comments in favor of a more implicit valuation (Doi, 1971; Lebra, 1986). Following this line of interpretation, therefore, from early childhood on, children are accustomed to these culturally valued narrative discourse skills through interactions with their mothers.

The two studies reported in this paper, however, presented a rather complicated picture. Recall that in Study One, although both Japanese parental groups used <u>huun</u> (well) as a discourse device, Japanese mothers living in the United States were more likely to use this device as prefacing of topic-extension. Similarly, in Study Two, Japanese mothers in the United States were found to behave more like North American mothers, who requested a substantial amount of description from their children.

We should keep in mind, however, that even if they behaved like North American mothers, those Japanese mothers did behave differently from North American mothers in other respects. That is, while North American mothers allow their children to take long monologic turns, and give many evaluative comments, Japanese mothers, whether living in Japan or the United States, simultaneously pay considerable attention to their children's narratives and facilitate frequent turn exchanges. Overall, therefore, this paper suggests that these differences and similarities among these three groups are explained in terms of culture. While inducting their children into a communicative style that is reflective of their native culture, Japanese mothers living in the United States are, at the same time, subject to the influence of Western culture.

This finding is critical; particularly as educational settings in the United States become increasingly multicultural, teachers often have difficulty understanding children from different cultural backgrounds. I hope that this study will provide the basis to break through cultural stereotypes and improve cross-cultural understanding.

Endnotes

1. Audio-tapes were transcribed verbatim for coding in the format required for analysis using the Child Language Data Exchange System (MacWhinney & Snow, 1985, 1990).

2. ANOVA revealed the following: (1) for Group, $F(1, 14) = .203$, $p > .05$, and (2) for Gender, $F(1, 14) = .351$, $p > .05$.

3. I judged the function of huun by the subsequent mother's or child's response. The categorization of topic-extension applies, if the mother extends the topic subsequent to huun. Likewise, simple acknowledgment applies, if the child still continues his or her talk right after huun. Finally, the topic-switch categorization applies, if the mother introduces an entirely new topic right after uttering huun. Thus, the function of huun was categorized backwards.

4. There was a main effect for group with Wilks' Lambda = .47, approximate $F(3, 12) = 4.467$, $p < .05$. Univariate ANOVAs, which were run for each of the dependent variables, revealed that this effect was largely attributable to a significant univariate effect on active topic-extension, $F(1, 14) = 5.26$, $p < .05$.).

5. The reason that I report five-year-olds' narratives in this paper is due to age constraints that emerge from analysis of the development of children's narratives. Children begin telling personal narratives from the age of two (Sachs, 1979), but in any culture these early productions are quite short through the age of three and a half years (McCabe & Peterson, 1991). Three-year-olds' narratives are often simple two-event narratives; four-year-olds' narratives are much more diverse, and five-year-olds tell lengthy, well-sequenced stories that end a little prematurely at the climax (McCabe & Peterson, 1990; Peterson & McCabe, 1983). In other words, preschool age represents the period of extremely rapid development in the child's acquisition of narrative capacity.

6. There was a multivariate effect of group, Wilks' Lambda = .18, approximate $F(12, 30) = 3.39$, $p < .01$. Univariate ANOVAs were run for each of the dependent variables. This effect was largely attributable to a significant univariate effect on maternal statements showing attention, $F(2, 20) = 4.29$, $p < .05$, and a marginal univariate effect on evaluations by mother herself, $F(2, 20) = 2.98$, $p < .08$. The results were further analyzed in Bonferroni Post Hoc tests.

7. There was a significant multivariate effect of group, Wilks' lambda = .24, approximate $F(10, 32) = 3.36$, $p < .01$. Univariate ANOVAs were run for each of the dependent variables. The effect of group was largely attributable to significant effects on maternal requests for descriptions, $F(2, 20) = 3.82$, $p < .05$, maternal evaluations, $F(2, 20) = 9.13$, $p < .01$, and statements showing attention, $F(2, 20) = 6.32$, $p < .01$. The results were further analyzed in Bonferroni Post Hoc tests.

8. In order to resolve issues of equivalence between the two languages (Japanese and English), the information unit was used for transcribing the data. For example, arui te arui te ("(I) walked and walked") is simple repetition/emphasis of one particular action and thus one proposition, while te de torte ake-ta ("(I) grabbed (it) by hand and opened (it)") consists of two separate actions and is thus considered two propositions. In other words, the definition of "utterance" in this study is based on the information unit. By doing so, the same phenomena observed in two different language groups were equated.

9. This ANOVA yielded a significant main effect of group, $F(2, 20) = 7.76$, $p < .01$. The ANOVA results were further analyzed in Bonferroni Post Hoc tests.

References

Caudill, W. & Schooler, C. (1973). Child behavior and child rearing in Japan and the United States: An interim report. Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease, 157(5), 323-338.

Caudill, W. & Weinstein, H. (1969). Maternal care and infant behavior in Japan and America. Psychiatry, 32, 12-43.

Dickinson, D. K. (1991). Teacher agenda and setting: Constraints on conversation in preschools. In A. McCabe & C. Peterson (Eds.), Developing narrative structure (pp. 255-301). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Doi, T. (1973). The anatomy of dependence (J. Bester, Trans). Tokyo: Kodansha International. (Original work, Amae no kozo, published by Kobundo in 1971)

Hymes, D. (1974). Foundations in sociolinguistics: An ethnographic approach. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Lebra, T. S. (1976). Japanese patterns of behavior. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

MacWhinney, B. & Snow, C. E. (1985). The child language data exchange system. Journal of Child Language, 12, 271-295.

MacWhinney, B. & Snow, C. E. (1990). The child language data exchange system: an update. Journal of Child Language, 17, 457-472.

Maynard, S. K. (1989). Japanese conversation: self-contextualization through structure and interactional management. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

McCabe, A. & Peterson, C. (1990). Parental styles of narrative elicitation. Paper presented at the fifth International Congress of Child Language, Budapest, Hungary.

McCabe, A. & Peterson, C. (1991). Getting the story: Parental styles of narrative elicitation and developing narrative skills. In A. McCabe & C. Peterson (Eds.),

Developing narrative structure (pp. 217-253). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Minami, M. & McCabe, A. (1991a). Haiku as a discourse regulation device: A stanza analysis of Japanese children's personal narratives. Language in Society, 20, 577-600.

Minami, M. & McCabe, A. (1991b). Rice balls versus bear hunts: Japanese and Caucasian family narrative patterns. Presented at the 16th Annual Boston University Conference on Language Development, Boston, MA.

Minami, M. & McCabe, A. (1993). Social interaction and discourse style: Culture-specific parental styles of interviewing and children's narrative structure. Presented at the 4th International Pragmatics Conference, Kobe, Japan.

Reese, E., Haden C. A. & Fivush, R. (1992). Mother-child conversations about the past: relationships of style and memory over time. Atlanta, GA: Emory Cognition Project.

Sachs, J. (1979). Topic selection in parent-child discourse. Discourse Processes, 2, 145-153.

Yamada, H. (1992). American and Japanese business discourse: a comparison of interactional styles. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Table 1. Coding System

(I) Topic-Initiation (Switching)

1. Open-ended questions initiating a new topic (e.g., "kyoo yochien de nani shita no?": "What did you do in preschool today?").
2. Closed-ended questions initiating a new topic (e.g., "suuji awase yatta?": "Did you play matching numbers?").
3. Statements initiating a new topic (e.g., "kono mae Disneyland e itta de sho.": "The other day we went to Disneyland.").

(II) Topic-Extension

4. Open-ended questions extending topics (e.g., "nani ga ichiban suki datta?": "What did you like best?").
5. Closed-ended questions extending topics (e.g., "tanoshi katta?": "Did you enjoy it?").
6. Statements extending a topic (e.g., "nani ka itteta de sho.": "You were saying something.").
7. Clarifying questions (e.g., "nani?": "what?").
8. Clarifying questions that were partial echoes (e.g., "dare ga chu: shite kuretan?": "Who gave you smacks?" after the child said, "chu: chu: chutte yatte.": "Smack, smack, smacked me.").
9. Echoes (e.g., "shira na katta no.": "You didn't know" after the child said, "shira na katta.": "I didn't know.").

(III) Other Conversational Strategies

10. Statements showing attention, such as brief acknowledgment (e.g., "un.": "Yeah.") and prefacing utterances (e.g., "huun.": "Well.").

Speech patterns that are categorized into topic-extension are further categorized into:

A. Descriptive statements (which describe a scene, a condition, or a state)
"ato Momotaro no hon mo atta de sho.": "Besides there was a book about the Peach Boy."
"denki ga tsuiteta ne.": "There were electric lights, you know."
"jibun de unten suru kuruma?: "Is it a car that you drive on your own?"

B. Statements about actions (which, accompanied by an action verb, describe a specific action)
"janken de saisho kimeta.": "We tossed first by scissors, paper, and rock."

"banana mo tabetan.": "You also ate a banana."

"umi ni ittetan?": "Did you go to the sea?"

"Yuki chan ga arattan.": "Yuki washed."

"nan te kaita no Yukari chan wa typewriter de?": "what did you write with the typewriter?"

C. Mother's evaluative comments

"sore ii ne.": "That's good, you know."

"Aki chan chiisa katta mon ne.": "Because you were small, Aki, you know."

"uso.": "That's not true."

D. Mother's request for child's evaluative comments

"sore doo omou?": "What do you think about it?"

"u chan no doko ga kawaii no?": "What do you think makes the bunny cute?"

"oishi kattan?": "Did it taste good?"

Table 2. Mean frequencies and percentages of mothers' prompts to children about past events

	Japanese Mothers in Japan M	Japanese Mothers in U.S. M	English-speaking Mothers M	F[a] values for main effect of GROUP
Requests for descriptions				
Frequencies	15.00	14.00	17.63	0.25
Percentages	14.72%	20.81%	18.90%	3.82*
Requests for actions				
Frequencies	23.50	15.50	17.88	0.95
Percentages	24.30%	22.68%	19.84%	0.37
Requests for evaluations				
Frequencies	16.50	8.75	21.38	2.04
Percentages	17.18%	14.24%	21.44%	1.40
Evaluations by mother herself				
Frequencies	15.40	7.75	28.25	2.98
Percentages	14.69%	8.85%	28.01%	9.13**
Statements showing attention				
Frequencies	27.10	17.50	7.50	4.29*
Percentages	26.18%	28.31%	8.46%	6.32**
Initiation				
Frequencies	2.80	2.75	2.38	0.65
Percentages	2.93%	5.11%	3.35%	2.71

*p < 0.05
**p < 0.01

[a] Degrees of freedom = 2, 20

Table 3a. Child's Ratio of Utterances Over Turns: English-speaking Group

English-speaking Male				English-speaking Female			
Child's Name Gender		UOT		Child's Name Gender		UOT	
Carl		3.857		Cara		1.581	
Gary		1.929		Harriet		1.274	
Ned		1.550		Kelly		1.619	
Paul		1.968		Leah		3.136	
	M	2.326	(SD 1.038)		M	1.903	(SD .837)

Table 3b. Child's Ratio of Utterances Over Turns: Japanese children in Japan

Japanese Male				Japanese Female			
Child's Name Gender		UOT		Child's Name Gender		UOT	
Akio		1.203		Ayaka		1.019	
Taka		1.102		Miki		1.197	
Takato		1.027		Minori		1.786	
Tomo		1.219		Sachi		1.157	
Waka		1.078		Yuka		1.135	
	M	1.126	(SD .083)		M	1.259	(SD .302)

Table 3c. Child's Ratio of Utterances Over Turns: Japanese children in U.S.

Boston Japanese Male				Boston Japanese Female			
Child's Name Gender		UOT		Child's Name Gender		UOT	
Kotaro		1.433		Aya		1.192	
Satoshi		1.294		Mari		1.176	
Shintaro		1.147		Nori		1.283	
Teru		1.162		Yukari		1.258	
	M	1.259	(SD .133)		M	1.227	(SD .051)

Figure Captions

Figure 1. Coding System.

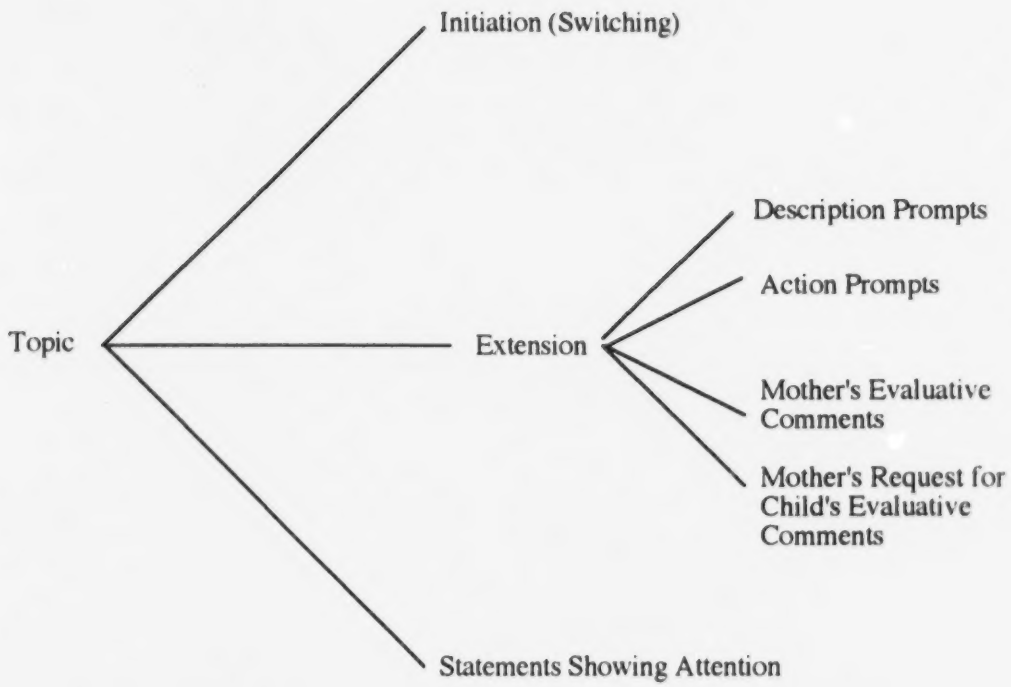

Initiation (Switching)
Description Prompts
Action Prompts
Topic
Extension
Mother's Evaluative Comments
Mother's Request for Child's Evaluative Comments
Statements Showing Attention

Figure 2. Maternal Statements Showing Attention (Frequency)

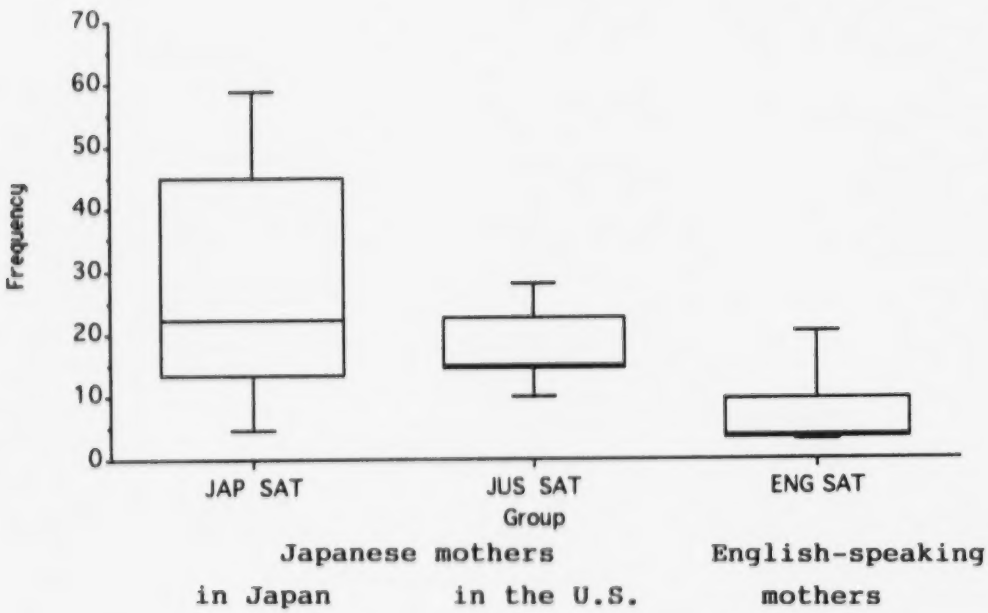

70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
Frequency
JAP SAT
JUS SAT
ENG SAT
Group
Japanese mothers in Japan
Japanese mothers in the U.S.
English-speaking mothers

Figure 3. Mother's Evaluative Comments (Percentage)

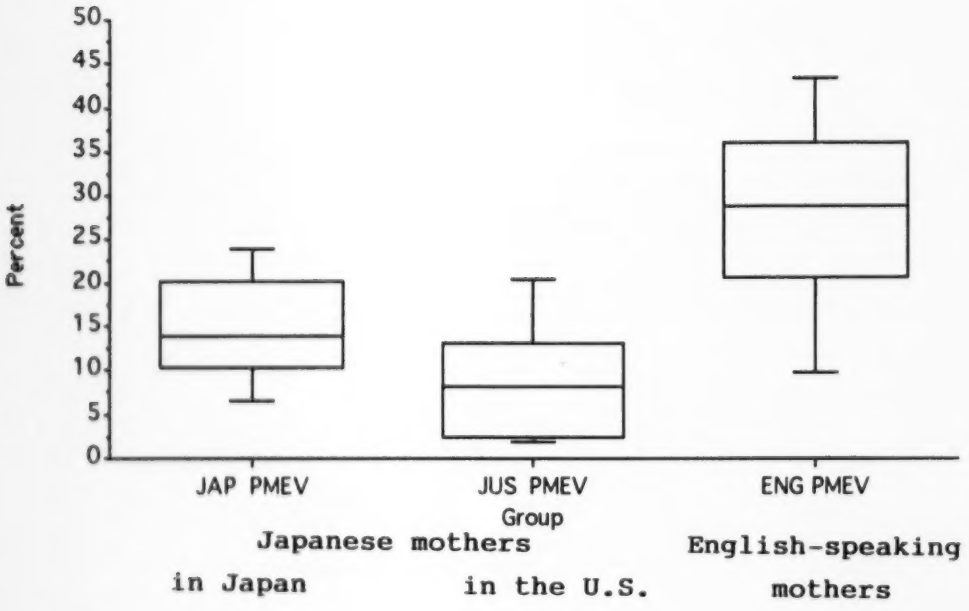

50
45
40
35
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
Percent
JAP PMEV
JUS PMEV
ENG PMEV
Group
Japanese mothers in Japan
Japanese mothers in the U.S.
English-speaking mothers

Figure 4. Maternal Statements Showing Attention (Percentage)

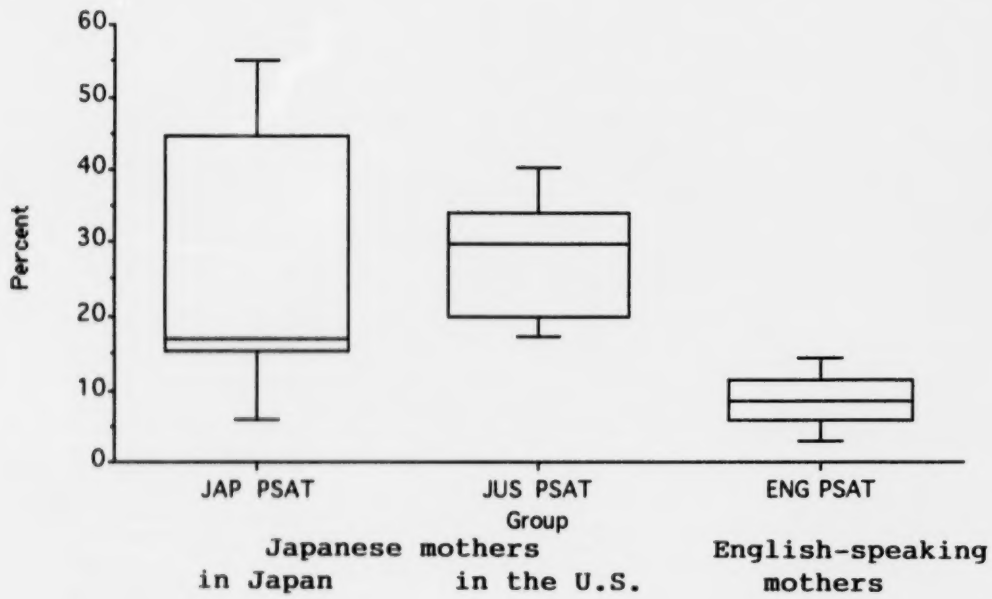

60
50
40
30
20
10
0
Percent
JAP PSAT
JUS PSAT
ENG PSAT
Group
Japanese mothers in Japan
Japanese mothers in the U.S.
English-speaking mothers

Figure 5. Maternal Requests for Descriptions (Percentage)

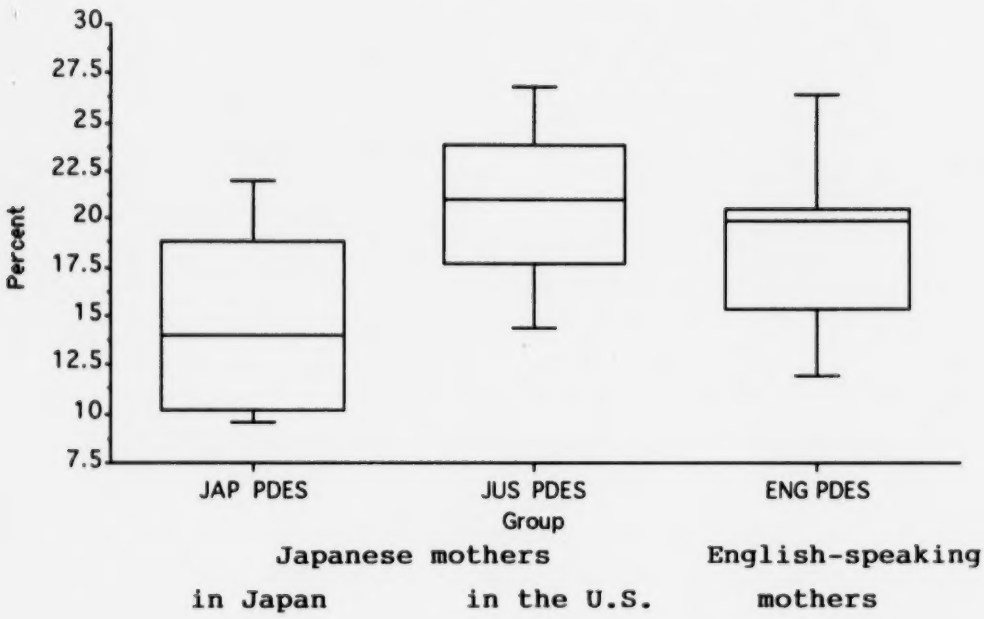
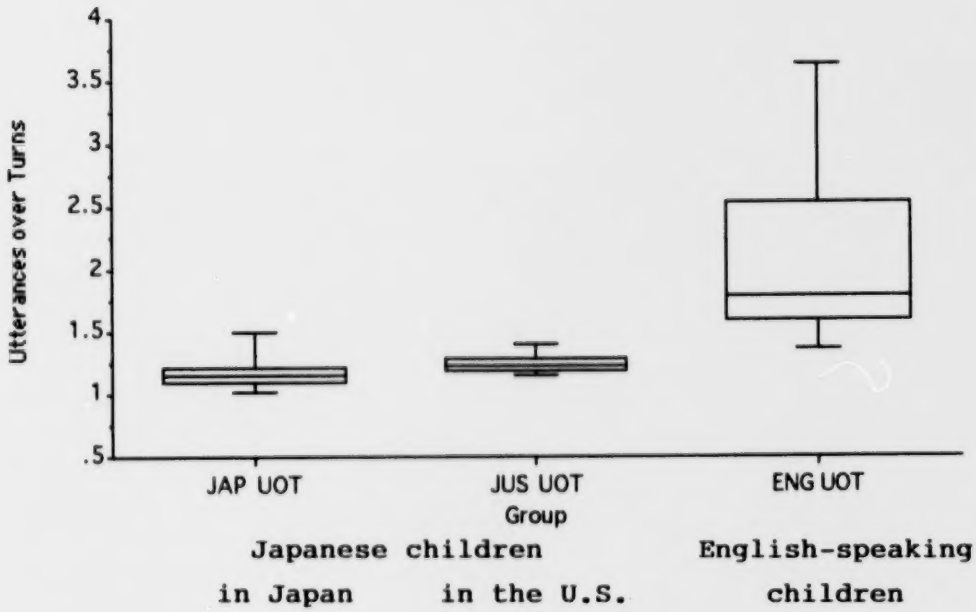

30
27.5
25
22.5
20
17.5
15
12.5
10
7.5
Percent
JAP PDES
JUS PDES
ENG PDES
Group
Japanese mothers in Japan
Japanese mothers in the U.S.
English-speaking mothers

Figure 6. Child's Ratio of Utterances over Turns


Utterances over Turns
4
3.5
3
2.5
2
1.5
1
.5
JAP UOT
JUS UOT
ENG UOT
Group
Japanese children in Japan
Japanese children in the U.S.
English-speaking children